

Jackson M.

[2007–2011 Excavations at Kilise Tepe:](#)

[A Byzantine Rural Settlement in Isauria.](#)

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In memory of Leslie S. B. MacCoub

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—Judges 6.23



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2007–2011 Excavations at Kilise Tepe *A Byzantine Rural Settlement in Isauria*

MARK JACKSON

The village is recognized as a fundamental feature of economy and society in the Byzantine world, and integral to the taxation system.¹ Though villages have been the subject of considerable research,² Kilise Tepe is one of the first small Byzantine rural settlements in south-central Anatolia to be deliberately excavated.

Kilise Tepe is a mound; first occupied in the early Bronze Age, it has deposits that date through to the thirteenth century AD (fig. 1).³ This lowland Isaurian settlement exploited an agriculturally rich zone on a major route between central Anatolia and the eastern Mediterranean. Measuring 100 meters east to west, by 150 meters north to south, it stands 13 meters high on top of a conglomerate terrace that rises at an elevation about 50 meters above the flood plain of the Göksu (Calycadnus/Kalykadnos) River at a point where the river is joined by a tributary known as the

Kurtsuyu (fig. 2). The top 0.20 meters of the mound is unstratified ploughsoil, but below this the archaeological deposits represent some four thousand years of human activity. About 1 meter of archaeological contexts at the top of this stratified sequence dates to the Byzantine period, a record of nearly one thousand years preserved in less than a 1000 millimeters of soil stratigraphy. Unlike the rings on a tree or the varves in a lake,⁴ these layers do not represent a continuous sequence of accumulated deposits, but they do include remarkably well preserved episodes that reflect significant moments in the life of the site and its inhabitants.

In some ways it is easy to see why the relatively small number of Byzantine archaeologists working in Isauria have ignored Kilise Tepe. The substantial collection of standing Byzantine buildings in the region is fragile and subject to decay, and while much important recording of these buildings has taken place, the resources available for such a Herculean task have been comparatively limited.⁵ Before excavation

1 A. Harvey, "The Village," in *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. E. Jeffreys, J. Haldon, and R. Cormack (Oxford, 2008), 328–33.

2 J. Lefort, C. Morrison, and J.-P. Sodini, eds., *Les villages dans l'empire byzantin (iv^e–xv^e siècle)* (Paris, 2005).

3 The mound, *tepe* or *höyük* in Turkish, known elsewhere as the "tell," is a familiar feature in the landscapes stretching from the Balkans to the Middle East; these sites are formed by the accumulated remains of successive periods of mud-brick architecture over many years of human settlement. By their nature, such mounds are a visible representation of past communities that invite today, as they did in the past, ideas and narratives about ancestry and questions about the continuity and longevity of people in their landscapes.

4 W. Eastwood et al., "Integrating Palaeological and Archaeo-Historical Records: Land Use and Landscape Change in Cappadocia (Central Turkey) since Late Antiquity," in *Archaeology of the Countryside in Medieval Anatolia*, ed. T. Vorderstrasse and J. Roodenberg (Leiden, 2009), 45–69, at 50.

5 H. Hellenkemper, *Kilikien und Isaurien* (Vienna, 1990); S. Hill, *The Early Byzantine Churches of Cilicia and Isauria* (Aldershot, 1996); I. Eichner, *Frübyzantinische Wohnhäuser in Kilikien* (Tübingen, 2011); G. Varinlioglu, "Living in a Marginal Environment: Rural Habitat and Landscape in Southeastern



FIG. 1 Kilise Tepe, view from the east (photo KT2007_S_1179: Bob Miller)

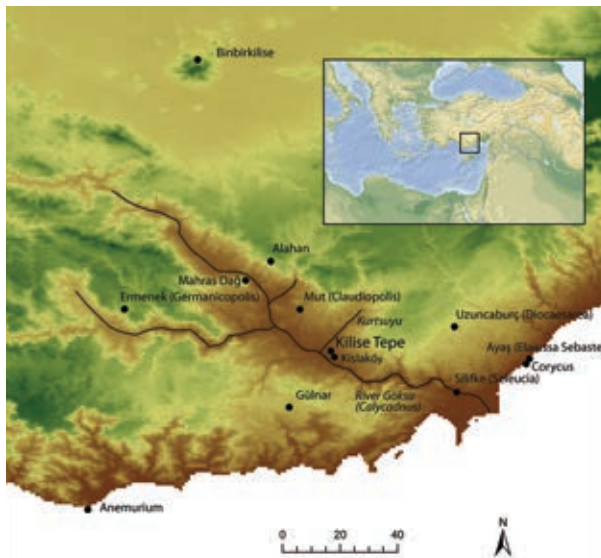


FIG. 2 Map of Kilise Tepe in Isauria (M. Jackson)

began at Kilise Tepe, there was certainly no sign of the kind of standing structures known elsewhere in the region, and until flooding the Göksu valley was proposed in the 1990s, there was also little threat to the mound. The initiation of plans to build a dam for hydroelectric power at Kayraktepe, approximately 10 kilometers north of Silifke, and to flood much of the valley, resulted in initial rescue work at Kilise Tepe

from 1994 to 1998, which was followed by research excavations in 2007–11.

The Byzantine architecture at Kilise Tepe was largely typical of many lowland buildings in southern Asia Minor. It did not consist of the mortared masonry, or even the well-dressed stone, found so often in the limestone hills of the Taurus. Even the church had walls made from two lines of roughly finished facing stones with a lime mortar and rubble core. Masonry from the fabric of the church however did include some well-dressed ashlar blocks, used, for example, as capstones for the foundation walls, and there are several imported carved marble fragments, including a marble column preserved to a length of 0.80 meters, and marble column bases and imposts.⁶ The walls of the other buildings at Kilise Tepe were made from undressed, dry-stone foundation walls usually topped with mud-brick standing walls. These walls were formed from two lines of unmortared, roughly finished facing stones laid dry in courses with a rubble core. It was clear that these well-constructed walls had been built carefully with the aid of string lines. Such buildings do not survive well above ground once their roofs collapse. And yet, unlike the buildings still standing at sites nearer the coast, used and reused by people over many centuries, the mud-brick buildings collapsed in antiquity, and even when standing would

Isauria,” *DOP* 61 (2008): 287–317; eadem, “Rural Habitat in the Hinterland of Seleucia ad Calycadnum during Late Antiquity,” in *Rough Cilicia: New Historical and Archaeological Approaches*, ed. M. C. Hoff and R. F. Townsend (Oxford, 2013), 199–209.

6 M. Jackson and D. Collon, “Architectural Fragments,” in *Excavations at Kilise Tepe, 1994–98: From Bronze Age to Byzantine in Western Cilicia*, ed. J. N. Postgate and D. C. Thomas, 2 vols. (London and Ankara, 2007), 1:215–36; M. Jackson, “The Church,” in *ibid.*, 1:185–97, esp. figs. 167, 172, and 175.

have needed constant maintenance. This means their excavation can reveal stratified archaeological assemblages associated with particular periods. The other significant benefit of excavating Kilise Tepe was that the removal of about 20 centimeters of topsoil revealed the upper parts of the walls of the Byzantine buildings. There were no logistical complications of overhanging masonry, high baulks, or heavy stones to remove, all of which present considerable challenges to the archaeologist in terms of health, safety, and conservation. Since the Byzantine phases were at the top of the sequence, the team was able to carry out something closer to the kind of open-area excavation that is often difficult on a complicated, multi-phase urban site.

Kilise Tepe, as a type of site typically found in rural Anatolia during the Byzantine period, is all the more important because such sites are not usually investigated in southern Asia Minor by Byzantinists.⁷ If we look at the mound as a physical record of human activity—rather than as a site that has no standing buildings—we have at Kilise Tepe a phenomenal archive of Byzantine rural settlement.

Research Questions

The work on the church in the 1990s at Kilise Tepe revealed that the early Byzantine basilica probably had been destroyed sometime in the early Byzantine period and replaced, possibly in the eleventh century, with a smaller, single-chambered building and associated cemetery. Excavation trenches outside the church signaled the presence of some well-preserved domestic contexts, but many questions remained unanswered.⁸

Since the site is located in the Göksu valley, which occupied a strategic position near the frontier region of Byzantine territory from the seventh century on, some of these questions related to the chronology of the site and its contribution to the broader historical narrative of the region. By engaging with historical questions, such as the nature of settlement between the seventh and ninth centuries—the so-called

“dark age”—Kilise Tepe is a case study for both the economy in Isauria and settlement in this relatively poorly understood period. This site takes on international significance in particular because it helps us to understand the Göksu and its metropolis at Seleuceia, which occupied strategic roles in the frontier zones with the Persian and then the Arab armies from the seventh century.⁹

But there is a potentially greater, if perhaps less immediately obvious, value in the excavation of such a site. Rural communities in Byzantine Anatolia remain relatively poorly understood, largely as a consequence of academic tradition. Indeed domestic buildings in Greece and Asia Minor in general have rarely been studied by Byzantinists.¹⁰

In view of the general paucity of knowledge about rural settlement in Byzantine Anatolia, our work for the period 2007–11 aimed to enable us to consider aspects of the lives of people in a particular rural settlement during the Byzantine period. We began the project in 2007, seeking to create a data set that would be the product of the detailed excavation and recording of domestic buildings and associated features. Our objective was to consider the environmental remains and artefacts within well-excavated contexts, both to characterize the nature and duration of the settlement and to enable us to make interpretations of the domestic contexts themselves. Careful examination of stratigraphy and local domestic ceramics and radiocarbon dating were planned to support interpretations of the character of Byzantine rural life at the mound. Through this we intended to refine the chronology of the settlement and provide a clearer narrative, based on domestic contexts, for the periods witnessed in the church phasing.

Over a century ago, when discussing the potential for further excavation at Madenşehir (Binbirkilise), located at the foot of the Karadağ near Karaman on the Konya Plain, Sir William Ramsay wrote, “The city was inhabited by a poorly educated and rustic population, and there was no hope of any important epigraphic,

7 The work at Çadır Höyük represents one of the few comparable rural settlements; see M. Cassis, “Çadır Höyük: A Rural Settlement in Byzantine Anatolia,” in *Archaeology of the Countryside in Medieval Anatolia*, ed. T. Vorderstrasse and J. Roodenberg (Leiden, 2009), 1–24.

8 M. Jackson, “The Church” and “North West Corner: Level I” in Postgate and Thomas, *Excavations at Kilise Tepe*, 1:185–210.

9 M. Jackson, “The Kilise Tepe Area in the Byzantine Era,” in *ibid.*, 1:19–29, at 25–29.

10 K. Kourelis, “Byzantine Houses and Modern Fictions: Domesticating Mystras in 1930s Greece,” *DOP* 65–66 (2011–12): 297–331, at 297.

still less of artistic discoveries.”¹¹ Ramsay’s priority, which was to find texts or artefacts of art historical significance, seems antiquated today, though it reflects the prevailing view of the relationship between texts and artefacts. Even until relatively recently, everyday objects were held to be inferior to objects of artistic value and texts.¹² In 1990, Nicolas Oikonomides said of the contents of Byzantine houses, “After some thought I decided that there was no point (and no way, for lack of sources) in looking into the huts of the destitute, which were virtually empty. Poor peasants no doubt constituted a large percentage—in certain periods, the majority—of the Byzantine emperor’s subjects, but their dwellings lack interest because they certainly contained very little.”¹³

In light of such statements, it is telling that in 1994 at Kilise Tepe, the survey before excavation recorded 48,000 sherds from the surface of the mound.¹⁴ Indeed the challenge in excavating such a site is not finding enough material or something to say about it, but managing and exploiting the potential of such huge quantities of material. After the 2007–11 excavations, our aim has been to consider the experiences of people whose lives shaped and were shaped by the material culture they left behind,¹⁵ to create a record, not simply of the contents of the houses, but of the activities, motivations, and even the agendas that occupied the lives of these peasant people.

Both the dwellings in which rural communities lived and the artefacts they housed—however many or few—provide us with insights not just into the materiality of objects, but into individual agency, experience, identity, and gender. As John Moreland has put it, “The reality is that people in the past, as in the present, made and manipulated objects (and texts) as projections of their views about themselves and their place in the world. Products of human creativity and invention were not simply essentialist reflections of an inner

(given) reality. Rather, they were actively used in the production and transformation of identities; they were used in the production of, and in resistance to, power; and they were used to create meaning in, and to structure, the routines of everyday life.”¹⁶ Indeed the study of the “entanglement” between humans and things is an important theme in contemporary archaeology, which recognizes that “[n]umerous different perspectives have converged on some version of the idea that subject and object, mind and matter, human and thing co-constitute each other.”¹⁷

Excavation of rural settlements like Kilise Tepe enables us to contextualize relationships at different scales and to consider more varied research agendas. The aim of this paper is to provide a brief overview of the recent excavations of the Byzantine levels at Kilise Tepe and a short introduction to some of the results. In the final section it will present case studies suggesting potential interpretations of the relationship between people and the things they used at Kilise Tepe during the Byzantine period.

Communication

The Göksu valley has always afforded one of the main natural passes through the central Taurus mountains, which link the Mediterranean and the Anatolian plateau. Although a relatively small settlement, Kilise Tepe was well situated and connected. The mound commands a position over rich, well-watered agricultural land, toward the southern end of a wide alluvial basin, a few kilometers north of the point where the Göksu valley disappears into a deep gorge.

The settlement on the mound Kilise Tepe had a 360-degree view that stretched many kilometers to afford connections with a host of other significant locations visible in the wider topography. While we do not know the name of the site at Kilise Tepe, we might surmise that the ownership of agricultural land around it and around other small settlements in the region during the Byzantine period was in the hands of those who lived in them rather than those of a large landowner. Quantification and mapping of sites in the

11 W. Ramsay and G. L. Bell, *The Thousand and One Churches* (London, 1909), 9.

12 J. Moreland, *Archaeology and Text* (London, 2001), 10.

13 N. Oikonomides, “Contents of the Byzantine House from the Eleventh to the Fifteenth Centuries,” *DOP* 44 (1990): 205–14, at 206.

14 D. Thomas, “The Surface Collection,” in Postgate and Thomas, *Excavations at Kilise Tepe*, 1:45–62, at 46.

15 C. Nesbitt and M. Jackson, *Experiencing Byzantium* (Farnham, 2013).

16 Moreland, *Archaeology and Text*, 80.

17 I. Hodder, “Human-Thing Entanglement: Towards an Integrated Archaeological Perspective,” *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 17 (2011): 154–77, at 155.

vicinity will help to reveal what appears to be a relatively high concentration of rural settlements in the area and might help to define the typical territories of these villages. The lower Göksu Valley is currently the subject of a field survey project that will reveal the nature of the pattern of settlement from prehistoric periods through to recent times.¹⁸

The Longue Durée

The Byzantine excavations at Kilise Tepe have taken place alongside work on the Bronze and Iron Age levels directed by J. Nicholas Postgate and Tervik Emre Şerifoğlu. One of the benefits of excavating the Byzantine phases within the wider (multi-period) Kilise Tepe Archaeological Project is that it provides an opportunity to consider the Byzantine activities against a sequence of change over several millennia. We can ask, for example, the extent to which patterns of production and subsistence visible in environmental evidence in the Byzantine period are different from, or typical of, this site in other periods, or the extent to which patterns and contrasts in the supply of raw materials for pottery making, stone, and metals, or in the environmental data (such as animal bones, shells and seeds) vary over the longue durée, as well as in the Byzantine period. This comparison of data over long periods helps to draw out the character of the settlement at particular periods.

Work on the shells from the excavations at Kilise Tepe in the 1990s, for example, revealed 3,455 fragments representing at least 2,788 individual shells that came from a variety of land snails, freshwater shells, and marine species.¹⁹ The combination of the evidence from the snail shells and the archaeobotanical analysis presented by Joanna Bending and Sue Colledge,²⁰ Sofie Debruyne noted, presented relatively consistent environmental conditions between the Bronze Age

and the Byzantine period.²¹ Among other results, these snail shells indicated an “open, lowland area with relatively dry climate under the influence of the Mediterranean.”²²

Some of these shells had been brought long distances, and sometimes they had been remodeled and worked. Debruyne’s work on the shell remains in 2007–11, for example, has shown evidence for different stages of processing of mother-of-pearl that seem to have taken place in the immediate vicinity of the church; the fragments may well have been part of the fabric of that building. She noted that, “Because of the small quantity of finds, their distribution in different contexts and the absence of finished objects, we can hardly speak of an actual mother-of-pearl workshop, but at least limited working seems to have taken place. As far as the remains are identifiable, it appears that marine mussels (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) and freshwater mussels (*Unionidae*) served as the raw material.”²³ She also noted a small amount of evidence for similar practices in the Bronze Age, and that similar interpretations have been proposed for the use of shells in the production of mother-of-pearl elsewhere in Anatolia (such as Amorium) during the Byzantine period. Here we see the potential of environmental data to shed light on activities that took place within a broader geographical context in the Byzantine period and over a longer period.

Work on the animal bones by Jennifer Jones and Julia Best has provided valuable insights into Byzantine dietary practices and animal husbandry, and a picture of long-term change in the region. During the Byzantine period, as in earlier times, “[t]he range of species was indicative of a sheep and goat based economy, with cattle and pig bones being represented to a much lesser extent.”²⁴ But there are also a few examples of the hunting of wild species, such as red deer and some fallow deer, from the Byzantine assemblage; these species were found also in earlier periods.

18 T. E. Şerifoğlu, N. MacSweeney and C. Colantoni, “The Lower Göksu Archaeological Salvage Survey,” accessed August 2014, http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/archaeology/people/mac_sweeney/goksu-river-survey.

19 S. Debruyne, “Tools and Souvenirs: The Shells from Kilise Tepe (1994–1998),” *AnatSt* 60 (2010): 149–60, at 150.

20 J. Bending and S. Colledge, “The Archaeobotanical Assemblages,” in Postgate and Thomas, *Excavations at Kilise Tepe*, 1:583–96, at 594.

21 Debruyne “Tools and Souvenirs,” 154.

22 Ibid.

23 S. Debruyne, “Stacks and Sheets: The Microstructure of Nacreous Shell and Its Merit in the Field of Archaeology,” *Environmental Archaeology* 19, no. 2 (2014): 153–65, at 153.

24 J. Jones and J. Best, “Kilise Tepe Report on the 2012 Field Season: Zooarchaeological Analysis,” Kilise Tepe Archaeological Project, report, 3, cited with permission (Kilise Tepe Byzantine Archive, School of History, Classics and Archaeology, Newcastle University).

As we await the final results and reports from environmental specialists, we look forward to offering answers to questions about the nature of the local environment, the economy, and subsistence practices at Kilise Tepe. They will also enable us to consider the impact on and role of communities living in this kind of settlement in the wider region.

It is impossible to be certain of the boundaries of the territory around Kilise Tepe, but we can be reasonably sure that people were exploiting the low-lying, well-irrigated lands closest to the site with intensive gardening in the area between the mound and the river. Both here, and on the slightly higher ground to the east, the land would have been suitable for cereal crops and fruit trees. Animal husbandry, particularly sheep farming, was carried out locally where manure would have helped to fertilize the soil. Sheep would also have enabled exploitation of less productive land farther afield. Today large areas of the surrounding country are given over to enormous olive groves, some quite old, and it would be reasonable to assume that the land might have supported similar trees in the past. Fish bones from our excavations reveal that inhabitants at Kilise Tepe, as in the local villages today, engaged in fishing in both the Kurtsuyu and Göksu rivers. Given the range and quality of the surrounding resources, it is fair to conclude that the villagers in this settlement could have mitigated against crop failure with a range of products, ensuring not only subsistence but an agricultural surplus that usually would have enabled them to meet their fiscal obligations.²⁵

Exchange Networks

We have no direct evidence that transport to the coast took place on the Göksu, but the river flowed from Kilise Tepe directly to Seleucia, the metropolis of Isauria. The river, therefore, would have been a potential way of moving heavy agricultural resources in bulk to the coast, especially by raft downstream.

Surrounding Seleucia and along the limestone foothills of the coast was a dense network of stone villages that contributed to the economic vitality of

the coastal zone in the Byzantine period.²⁶ One of the main types of container from the region was the famous Late Roman 1 (LR1) amphora, which was produced at coastal sites such as Elaiussa Sebaste.²⁷ Such amphorae have been found in several of the buildings at Kilise Tepe, though not made of the local clay. The discovery of these amphorae suggests goods were coming inland from the coast. Such containers must have been rather ubiquitous in this part of the world in the early Byzantine period, like the plastic crates used for so many different purposes in the area today. LR1 amphorae, usually used for carrying wine, have been found in most of the buildings at Kilise Tepe. Sometimes, as in area J15, they were reused for other purposes (see below).

The production of ceramics in the early Byzantine world was carried out at a variety of scales. The LR1 amphorae made on the coast, for example, were produced in huge quantities for exporting across the early medieval world. Other kinds of ceramics, especially those for household use, were made in a range of settings down to production at a household level.²⁸ Clay for the production of the water jars at Kilise Tepe was sourced locally. An outcrop of serpentinite in the Kurtsuyu river explains the presence of this relatively rare mineral in the clays used to make these jars and would suggest that the clays were extracted downstream, probably close to Kilise Tepe, where a few wasters have been found.²⁹ The similarity in the range of forms and decoration of wheel-made water jars found in different houses across the site may suggest production and acquisition from specialized potters working at or nearby Kilise Tepe, and production at something approaching a workshop rather than a household level; this reflects the practice found until recently in many parts of the Mediterranean

26 Varinlioğlu, "Living in a Marginal Environment," and "Rural Habitat in the Hinterland of Seleucia" (both n. 5 above).

27 A. F. Ferrazzoli and M. Ricci, "Production and Trade of a Cilician City from the Roman to Byzantine Age," in Hoff and Townsend, *Rough Cilicia* (n. 5 above), 214.

28 D. P. S. Peacock, *Pottery in the Roman World: An Ethnoarchaeological Approach* (London, 1982).

29 M. Jackson, "Byzantine Ceramics from the Excavations at Kilise Tepe 2007 and Recent Research on Pottery from Alahan," *Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı* 26, no. 2 (2008): 159–74; C. Knappett and V. Kilikoglu, "Pottery Fabrics and Technology," in Postgate and Thomas, *Excavations at Kilise Tepe* (n. 6 above), 1:247.

25 Harvey, "Village" (n. 1 above), 329–30.

and the Balkans, where cooking pots are often made at a household level, but water jars are acquired from more specialized potters.³⁰ The division of labor in Byzantine peasant households was such that everyone was involved in the village economy.³¹ Ethnographic study suggests that often women made coarse wares at a household level alongside other work, both for subsistence practices and to supplement income, while more specialized production requiring a greater investment of time and resources tended to be a full-time, male activity.³² Production may have been shared: the *botijas* flasks made in Spain in recent times were wheel-made by men but decorated by women before being exported long distances.³³ The highly decorated vessels found across the site at Kilise Tepe and beyond in the Göksu valley provide a case study from the Byzantine period that will be discussed further by the author in a future article.

At the same time the assemblage of ceramics reflects the presence of cooking vessels from much farther afield. The concave and rolled rimmed cooking pots of the kind made at the Dhiorios production site on Cyprus reflects a tradition that extends across the Mediterranean and may indicate exchange with Cyprus.³⁴ Whether the clay sources are the same is a question for the future, but the form is familiar and shows that, in the closed cooking pots at least, the community at Kilise Tepe shared ideas with those along the Mediterranean coast. A lack of open frying pan forms, however, such as those found on the coast at Anemurium, testifies to a narrower range of certain utensils at Kilise Tepe.³⁵ The presence of a very small amount of red slipped wares at Kilise Tepe, including African Red Slip ware, Late Roman C ware, and Late Roman 3 amphorae from western Asia Minor, suggests it was possible to acquire items that had traveled considerable distances. In these differences we see elements of local cooking and eating practices and the ways that people in this Isaurian village shaped their

own identities while engaging in social practices and exchange networks that covered a broad area.

Further examples of material culture testify to existence of other kinds of exchange networks and routes. Locally sourced limestone, for example, was used to make mortars and rollers found in several of the buildings, but other kinds of stone, particularly vesicular lavas and the basalts used for grinding grains, must have been acquired through procurement or exchange since they could not be sourced locally.³⁶

Methods

As part of the post-excavation process from the first phase of excavations at Kilise Tepe, all the Byzantine architectural remains from the 1990s, together with the site grid, were digitized into AutoCAD by the author. These data sets were imported into ESRI ArcGIS (geographical information system). This GIS has formed the basis for compiling the various registers of spatial data and was an essential tool for exploring and interpreting the data during the period from 2007 to the present.³⁷ The first new site-wide data to be added in 2007 were the results of a magnetometer survey carried out by Katie Green; this was complemented by the resistivity survey carried out by Alex Turner and the author (fig. 3). The boundaries of walls and contexts were added as digitized polygons traced from the scanned field plans of each trench and can be followed into the unexcavated areas with the help of the geophysical survey results (fig. 4). All the other databases created by different specialists working at the site can be linked to the GIS by using the provenance information of the finds. This means that all items, whether pottery, glass, bone, seeds, worked stone, or other materials, can be compared by square, and for excavated areas all artefacts and ecofacts can also be provenanced and compared by archaeological context. Individual find spots of small finds were recorded in three dimensions where possible and incorporated into the ArcGIS, having been digitized from the manual plans made by excavators, or having been recorded using a total station and imported digitally to the GIS.

30 Peacock, *Pottery in the Roman World*, 17.

31 Harvey, "Villages," 329.

32 Peacock, *Pottery in the Roman World*, 25–26.

33 Ibid., 63.

34 H. Catling, "An Early Byzantine Pottery Factory at Dhiorios in Cyprus," *Levant* 4 (1972): 1–82.

35 C. Williams, *Anemurium: The Roman and Early Byzantine Pottery* (Toronto, 1989), fig. 32.

36 D. Heslop, personal communication, email message to author, 27 November 2014.

37 The GIS has been produced by Tim Sandiford, Tom Sutcliffe, and the author.



FIG. 3 Site plan of 1990s excavation with resistivity survey (M. Jackson and A. Turner)



FIG. 4 Results from fig. 3, with the addition of the excavated buildings excavated from 2007 to 2011 and geophysical interpretation (M. Jackson and A. Turner)

The value of the GIS is that various layers of spatial data can be compared against one another and the data explored and queried within the GIS environment, and, finally, that the data can be presented and archived.

The Byzantine Settlement

The mound at Kilise Tepe measures 1.5 hectares, which is comparable in size to other small Byzantine villages from the region.³⁸ The church had the plan of a typical Cilician three-aisled basilica with side chambers and a passage to the east of the apse. It occupies a position near the center of the mound, close to the top of the slope on the west side of the site, where it would have towered over the road and floodplain below.

The plan of the buildings was determined by a combination of methods, including resistivity survey

and excavation. One of the most striking aspects of the plan of the domestic buildings is the consistent orientation of the walls. In part this is to be expected since the close packing of buildings on a mound means there are fewer options for creativity, even when remodeling a structure, so that buildings tend to conform to the orientation of their neighbors. The pattern of walls shows a series of buildings aligned broadly parallel with each other. Their north and south walls run mostly parallel with the east-west running walls of the church. What is striking is that while the walls of the church run perpendicular to each other, the east and west walls of the domestic buildings follow a different alignment. This means that most domestic buildings have a slightly oblique parallelogram or tetragonal form rather than being strictly rectangular. This alignment is characteristic of the majority of buildings excavated, from as far north as M18 and as far south as N11.

This article will concentrate on the final phase of occupation in the early Byzantine period, which

38 Varinlioglu, "Rural Habitat in the Hinterland of Seleucia" (n. 5 above), 202.

is particularly well preserved. To find completely closed household assemblages is an unusual archaeological situation, and here we must qualify the term “abandonment.”³⁹ In the words of Michael Schiffer, “most sites are not little Pompeii,”⁴⁰ and at Kilise Tepe there is evidence for damage to the vessels before the collapse of the buildings onto the contents of the rooms. The causes of this damage are worthy of consideration because the presence of so many artefacts on the floor raises the question of what final events at the site led to their preservation. Contexts from this phase at Kilise Tepe offer significant potential to determine this since the patterning of objects on the floors of excavated houses presents a highly informative record of the processes of site formation and the activities surrounding the deposition of the objects.

The processes of site formation will guide us to interpretations about the final events in the lives of the houses, and the activities of and objects owned by the people who lived in them. One of our goals has been the close examination and quantification of the objects from house-floor assemblages and the recording of artefact distributions across the floors in order to support interpretation of the activities that led to the distribution of artefacts in their find spots.

Building East of the Church

We excavated a significant part of a large building, almost a rhombus in plan, which occupies a position of potential significance directly east of the church. The outline of the unexcavated parts of the structure, visible in the resistivity survey data, enables us to reconstruct its dimensions: 20.45 meters × 21.45 meters. There is no sign of any direct architectural connection with the church, indeed, the different orientations of the east wall of the church and the west wall of this structure mean that in square L16, the west wall of the building W5000 passed 0.90 meters away from the northeast corner of the church, while the reconstructed extension of that wall to the south runs 5.40 meters from southeast corner of the church. The narrow space between the buildings to

the north is sufficient for a pathway, but it is interesting that here in unit 93212 the excavators recovered one of our best preserved collections of animal bones—large elements that had not been subject to trampling. These bones would seem to provide evidence that the space between the buildings was used for refuse disposal and not as a walkway, at least in the time when the area was used for rubbish disposal. The closeness of the buildings would not have easily accommodated processions around the church, and the untrampled bones would appear to confirm that there was not much movement.

The building has a series of about fourteen rooms of varying size. A sample that was excavated revealed that the walls had suffered considerably from stone robbing in relatively recent times; their negative impressions turned out to be robber trenches. Nevertheless, a significant number of the walls, floors, doorways, fire installations, and other structures were excavated relatively intact. The stone walls were well constructed and very similar in character to the typical Byzantine walls on the site. Most of the floors in this building consisted of tamped earth, but there was a paved area on the floors of two spaces on the west side of the rooms at the center of the complex.

Interior features within the rooms included stone benches and fire installations. Stone benches built up against the west side of wall W5300 were identified in two rooms in the northeast of the structure (M17b and M17d) (fig. 5). The bench in M17b was ca. 2.65 meters long by 0.60 meters wide and was made of stone. It contained a fire installation (FI09/07) consisting of two roof tiles (*tegulae*) tipping toward one another. The bench in M17d, which is to the south, featured a line of three long stones that together formed the outside of the bench and ran up to a stone-lined box formed at the north end.

The discovery in M16a of collapsed stone walls on the floor in the southwest corner of the paved area shows that in spite of later activity in the area near the church, and more recent stone robbing, this part of the building remained undisturbed until excavated. One of the most intriguing aspects of the excavation of this building was that the floors had a lower relative number of finds, particularly of complete objects, compared with rooms in other parts of Kilise Tepe, where floors often yielded multiple finds. The impression given by this structure was that many of the rooms had been intentionally cleared of material and that this took place at the time of or soon after the abandonment of the structures, long before the recent stone robbing and associated disturbance.

39 L. Lavan, E. Swift, and T. Putzeys, “Material Spatiality in Late Antiquity: Sources, Approaches and Field Methods,” in *Objects in Context, Objects in Use: Material Spatiality in Late Antiquity*, ed. L. Lavan, E. Swift, and T. Putzeys (Leiden, 2007), 1–42, at 5.

40 M. B. Schiffer, “Is There a ‘Pompeii Premise’ in Archaeology?” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 41, no. 1 (1985): 18–41, at 38.

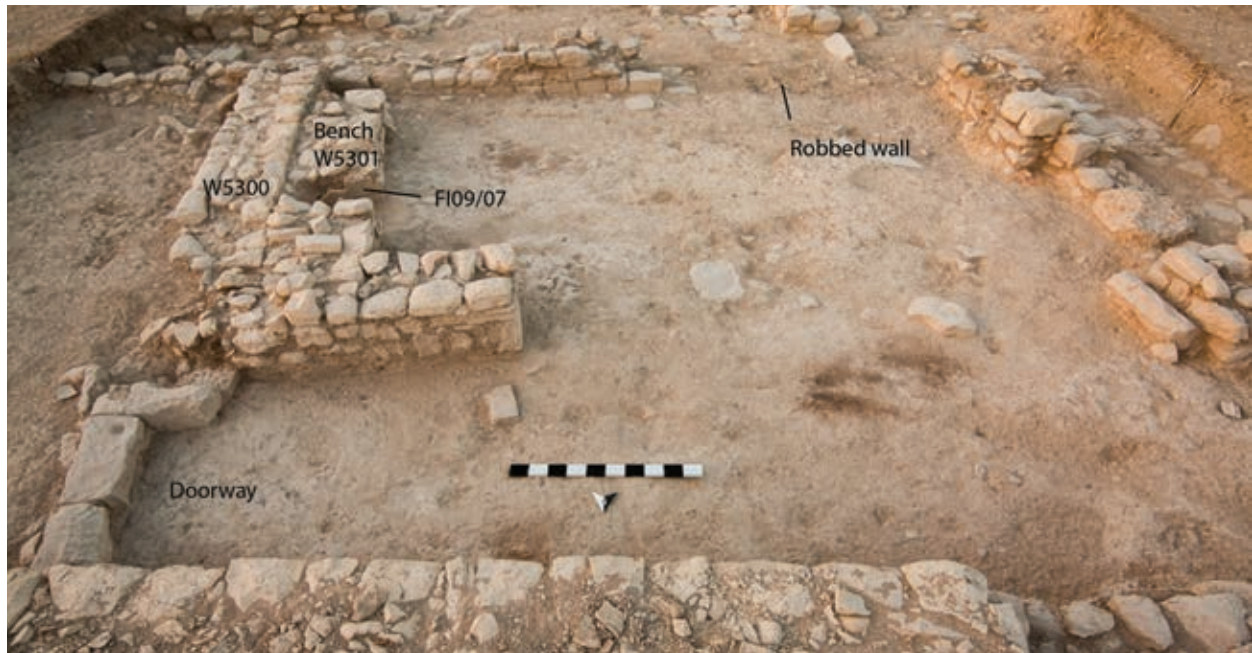


FIG. 5 View to the south of spaces on the northern part of the complex in M17. Note the doorway (with socket) in the left foreground and the location of the fire installation (FI09/07) in the stone bench (W5301) in M17b to the south (excavation: S. Moore and T. Hawkins; photo KT2009_S_1123; Bob Miller; annotations M. Jackson)

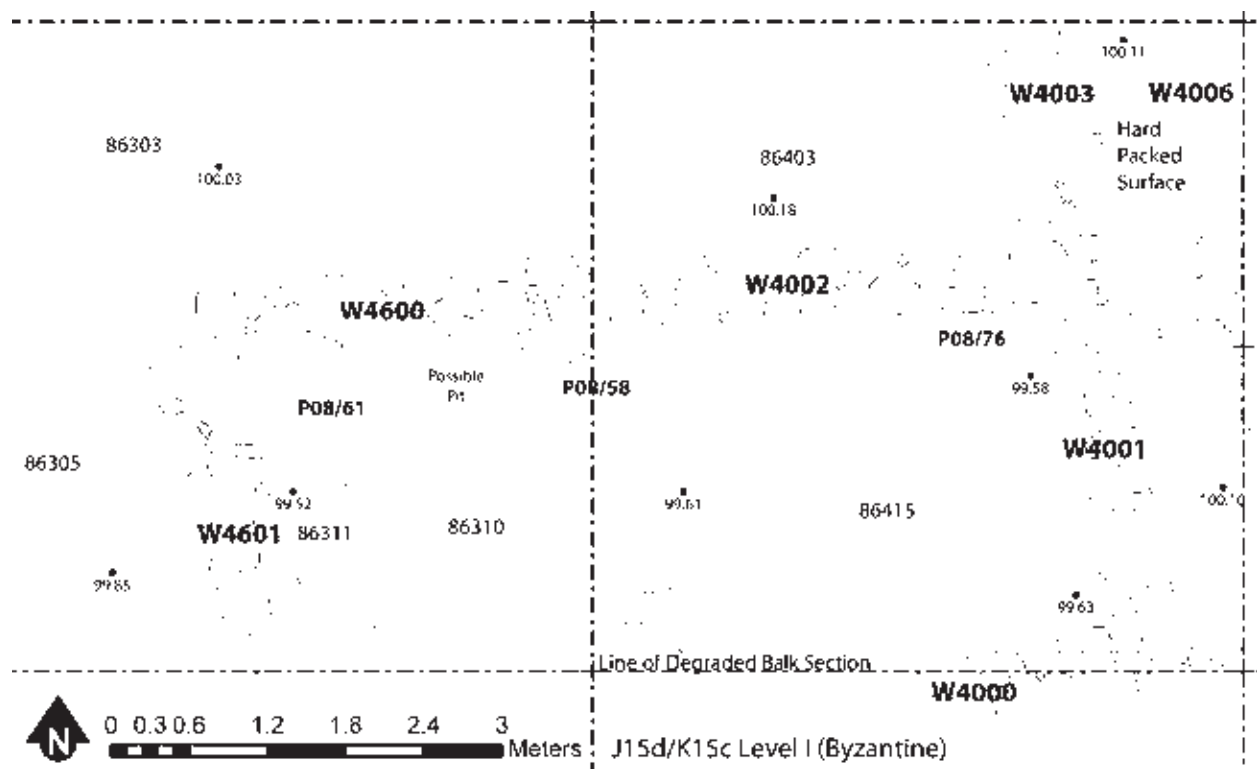


FIG. 6 Building located in area J15d and K15c south of the church (T. Sandiford)

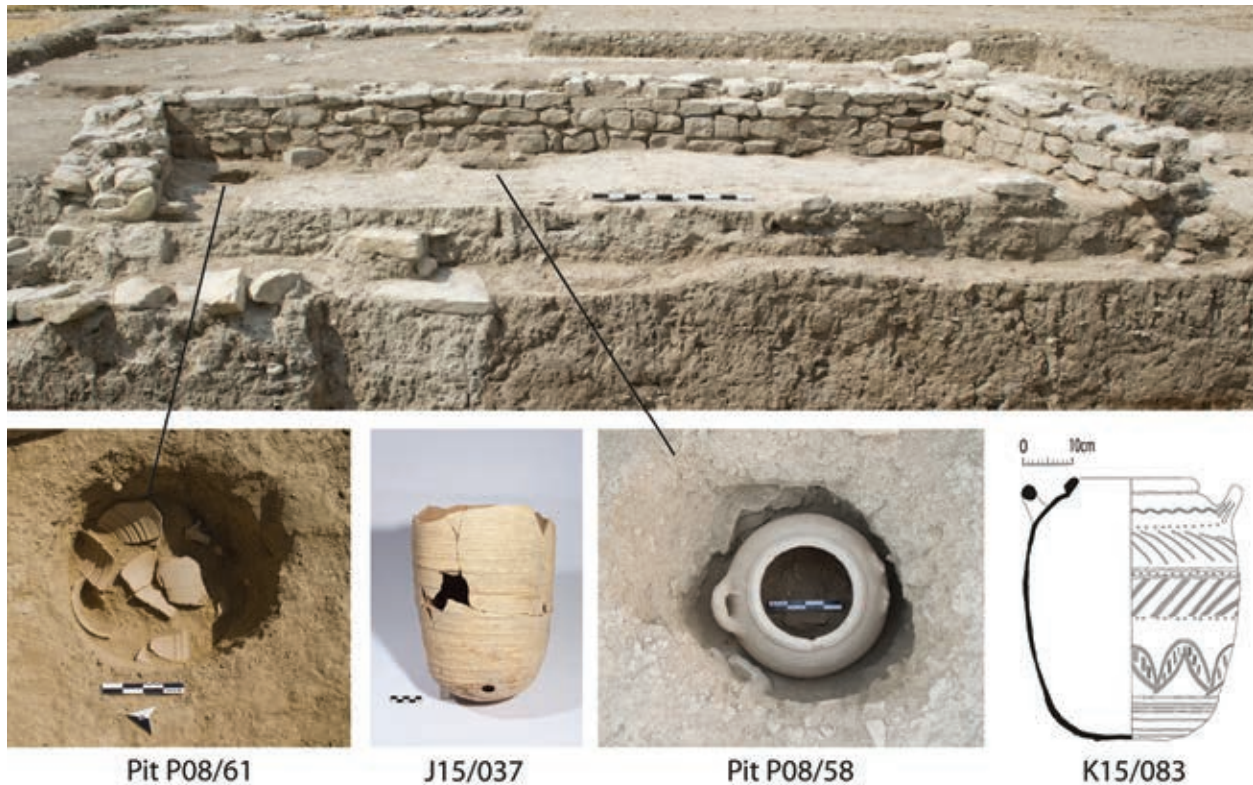


FIG. 7 Building in J15d and K15c from the south showing the vessel J15/037 found in pit P08/61, and K15/083 found in pit P08/58 (excavation: K. Grant; photo KTo8S-6173, below left to right KTo8S-6014, KT2009_A_3007, KTo8S-5937; Bob Miller; drawing and composite: M. Jackson)

J15–K15 – Building South of the Church

In area J15d and K15c we excavated a building oriented east-west, forming a space with internal dimensions of ca. 6 meters \times 2.8 meters (figs. 6 and 7). The north wall of the building ran east-west following the line of the south wall of the church, while the rest of the structure followed the alignment of the other domestic buildings.

We found stratified deposits that help to determine the early chronology of the structure. Along the northern edge of the room toward the western end, two pits were uncovered that were associated with an early floor; these were subsequently covered by a later floor.

Pit P08/58, fill 86425 was found on the boundary between J15 and K15. In it had been placed a large jar (K15/083). Artefact fragments in the fill of the pit included a broken iron nail; a fragment of glass; fragments of two lamps, including part of a nozzle with sooting from an early Byzantine wheel-made lamp;

fragments of shell; and bone fragments. The fill of vessel K15/083 was excavated in four layers and included fragments of shell, bone, and seeds. We await the results of the archaeobotanical report, which may support the interpretation that the pit was used for storage.

A radiocarbon sample (K15/077; OxA-21336) of charcoal from a fragment of olive wood (*Olea europaea*) lodged in the central compacted layer excavated as 86428 yielded the rather early date of 1696 \pm 29BP, calAD263–397. Although the charcoal sample provides a terminus post quem for the fill of the vessel, it is likely that it was a fragment of “old wood,” or perhaps a fragment residual in the soil fill, which would explain the early date.

The possibility that K15/083 dates later than the C14 sample included in the fill is made more likely by the dating of the second pit (P08/61) located nearby in the northwest corner of the room; a charcoal (*Pinus brutia/halepensis*) sample (J15/034, OxA-21337) that



FIG. 8 Assemblage of pottery finds from the bench in J15d. Left to right: J15/028, J15/029, J15/043, J15/044 (photos 2009_KT_A_3016, 3037, 2204, 3118: Bob Miller; drawings: M. Jackson).

yielded a radiocarbon date of 1608 \pm 28BP, calAD412–532. Several large fragments of ceramic vessel found in the fill were reconstructed and shown to be the base and body of a LRA 1 (J15/037); the neck and shoulder were missing, but the root of a single amphora handle was found. A hole had been punched near the base, apparently from the inside, perhaps to allow the vessel to drain or to have been bunged; this is a recognized treatment of amphorae.⁴¹

A hoard of nineteen *nummi* found on the floor in the northeast corner of this room in K15c and recovered with a 2 millimeter sieve reflects their deposition in or after the late fifth century. These coins were part of a single group dating mostly to the late fifth century. The latest, especially K15/036g and K15/082j, from the reign of Zeno, provide a terminus post quem; others may date as late as AD 498.⁴² They complement the radiocarbon date for the early use of the building in the late fifth to early sixth century.

41 T. Pena, *Roman Pottery in the Archaeological Record* (Cambridge, 2007), 122.

42 This conclusion is based on a spreadsheet dated 21 October 2013 shared by Sam Moorhead.

Lying on top of and sealing Pit P08/61, the later of the two pits, was a floor and a stone and mud-brick bench-like feature (86311) that stretched across the west end of the room against its west wall. The bench was 2.20 meters long \times 0.65 meters wide and was composed of stones 0.25 meters \times 0.20 meters \times 0.15 meters. This bench appears to have been used for the storage of food preparation vessels since on it was found a small assemblage of vessels connected with the storage and cooking of food and liquids (fig. 8).

The best preserved and contextualized of these objects was a cooking pot (J15/028) set into the central part of the bench. Also found on the bench was a collection of sherds that represented a substantial proportion of a LRA1 (J15/042, not pictured); the body of a locally made jar decorated with red painted spirals (J15/043); the wide, rounded base of a closed wheel-made vessel cooking pot (J15/044); fragments of the lower part of an amphora (J15/027) made in a local fabric but with form and decoration apparently imitating an LRA1; and a cooking pot with faint orange-brown wash in wide undulating wavy bands on the exterior (J15/044).

The circumstances that led to the deposition of these items are not entirely clear, but they seem to be

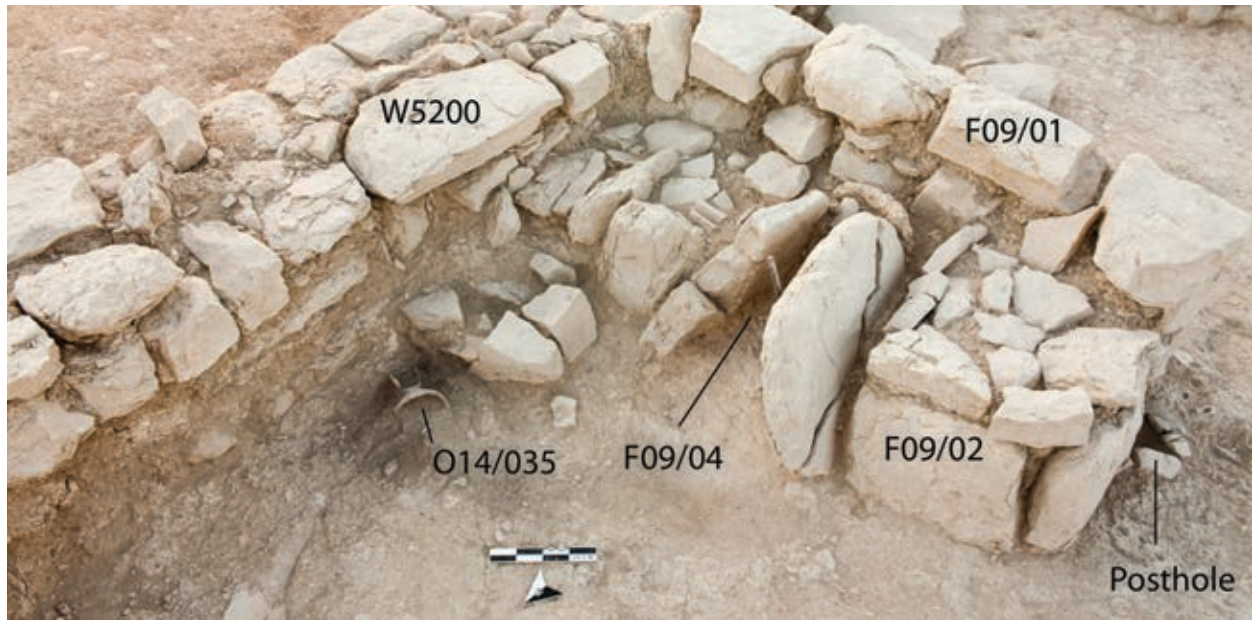


FIG. 9 O14 building: F09/01 with F09/02 and F09/04 and juglet O14/035 lying in situ in 95211 before excavation (excavation: K. Green and J. Levell; photo KT2009_S_2251; Bob Miller; annotations M. Jackson)

an assemblage associated with the bench and then left in situ. The fill lying over the mud-brick bench (86310) provided the matrix for most of these finds, but also contained a considerable amount of other, poorly stratified material. In spite of the very careful excavation of this fill, the majority of the artefacts were small and abraded and multiple periods were represented, suggesting that the rest of the room's fill also was poorly stratified and represented post-abandonment fill.

Building in M18

A preliminary report of the building excavated in M18 in 2007 interpreted as an early Byzantine house has been published recently elsewhere and has been omitted here.⁴³

Building in O14

The building in O14 was part of a complex of structures represented by a large internal space 6.75 meters north-south \times 3.42 meters east-west. The west wall of the building (W4500–W5201) was directly below about

0.10 meters of topsoil (95310) and was associated with a significant amount of tumble and large stones.

The building was entered through a doorway at the northern end of the west wall (W4500). A series of three stone steps gave access to the space. Opposite the steps, on the east side of the room, a stone bench (F09/03) three courses high (2.46 meters \times 0.60 meters \times 0.35 meters) ran along the west side of W5200. The floor in the northern part of the room between the stairs and the bench was paved in large, irregular limestone slabs (95209) that respected a bench. In the center of the northern half of the building was F09/03 (O14/017), a large, roughly hewn circular limestone with pockmarks on the surface. The function of this feature is not clear; it might have been used to support a roof post, but the pockmarks suggest it may have served as a workbench or table. The floor sloped southward quite considerably to the south of F09/03 where the surface of the room was unpaved plaster.

The structure was divided into two halves by a short partition wall running 1.5 meters into the room, which abutted W5200 at its east end; figure 9 shows a small posthole that testifies to a post located at its west end. This partition created two spaces: one to the north, ca. 4.15 meters \times 3.35 meters, and the other

43 M. Jackson, "Byzantine Settlement at Kilise Tepe in the Göksu Valley," in Hoff and Townsend, *Rough Cilicia* (n. 5 above), 226–30.

to the south, 1.75 meters \times 3.5 meters (north-south \times east-west respectively). The south side of the partition itself (F09/01) was a wall three courses (0.43 meters) high and one course wide, which provided a raised back for a low bench built against it on the north side; this bench, which would presumably have originally been covered in a mud-plaster, incorporated a fire installation (F09/04) built into the center. The bench (F09/02) was 0.46 meters wide and only 0.37 meters high (two courses). The fire installation consisted of two large, flat stones set in mud brick and placed on their sides, tilting toward each other; the base was colored by burning and associated with ash (95211) that spilled out to the north and east.

Excavation revealed that in an earlier phase, the east end of the south wall (W5202) once contained a threshold (F09/12) represented by four large, flat-topped pieces of limestone within and abutting the wall. This doorway was subsequently blocked, and in the final phase of the structure, the area in the southeast corner of the building was used for the storage of the *pithoi* found smashed there (figs. 11 and 13).

The fill above the floor in the southern part of the building (95207) was a fine, soft powdery soil. The quantification of the artefacts from 95207 reveals that they represent an exceptionally well preserved assemblage. One hundred percent of the rims or bases of at least six ceramic vessels found lying on the floor within the O14 building were reconstructed (fig. 10).

These finds are mostly local and regionally produced ceramics, including new types. A radiocarbon sample (O14/101) from 95207 was taken from a small area of burning associated with the fire installation (F09/04), sealed within a destruction deposit. This sample may have helped to date the abandonment of this room, but unfortunately it failed “due to low yield.” A single coin of Heraclius provides a seventh-century date for 95207, but it should be treated with caution since coins are relatively rare at Kilise Tepe and this one provides only a terminus post quem for the deposit. A more substantial program of radiocarbon samples is planned based on samples of short-lived species from other areas of 95207.

Although unit 95207 seems to have been exceptionally well stratified, with only 2 very small sherds out of 752 not belonging to well-preserved early Byzantine vessels, later units from the room (above 95207) seem to have been somewhat mixed.

These units sometimes contained joins with objects that were clearly part of the assemblages within this structure, but they also contained intrusive material. That there are joins between ceramics in units 95207 and 95204, which was excavated above 95207, suggests that there was not a great deal of mixing of the deposits, but that these upper parts of the room were subject to disturbance. One possible explanation of the stray intrusive finds is that the earlier wares were incorporated within the fabric of the building, perhaps within mud bricks that then collapsed onto the floor; the other is that the earlier material was simply brought in with the general mixing of the site following abandonment.

The positions of artefacts identified within this fill were recorded in situ. In the northeast corner of the room, the base and body of jug N15/038 was found on the paved floor. At the foot of the stairs and apparently lying flat on the soil on the floor was a series of sherds that made up a large storage vessel (O14/034; fig. 11). It is interesting that this large vessel would have been smashed at the foot of the stairs. The presence of the sherds lying flat on the floor surface suggests that they had been trodden on for a period of time before they were covered.

In the southwest corner of the room was a complete but broken LRA1. In front of the bench a small juglet (O14/035) was the only artefact excavated within powdery ash (unit 95211) on the floor in front of the fire installation.

At least two complete but broken *pithoi* (100% of rims and bases preserved) were discovered in the building. To the south of F09/01, the complete rim of a large *pithos* (O14/003) was found lying upside down with large body sherds from the same vessel surrounding it. Sitting within this upturned rim was object O14/008, a limestone mortar. A cylindrical limestone roller (O14/004) was found adjacent to O14/003 and W5200 (fig. 12). It would appear from the placement of the large limestone mortar and roller that these *pithoi* were deliberately smashed and then left in pieces.

The impression given by the relationship between the fragments of these large vessels and the other finds was that this room had been abandoned with the complete vessels inside, but that at some point following and before the collapse of the building, they had been intentionally destroyed.

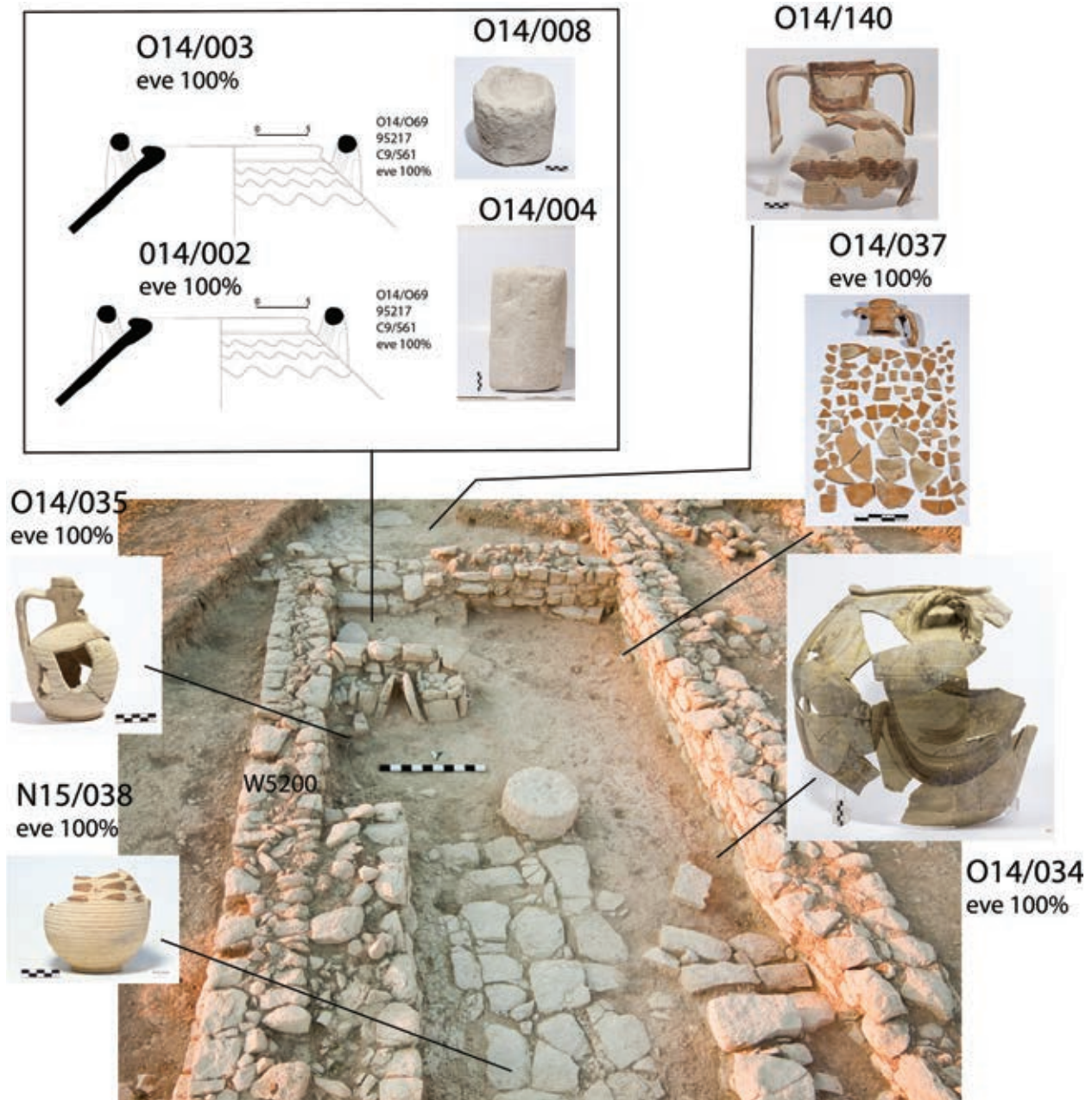


FIG. 10 Building in area O14 showing the locations of the pottery found in situ (excavation: K. Green and J. Levell; photos 2009_KT_S_2238, clockwise from top right 2010_KT_A_4638, 2009_KT_A_3087, 2012_KT_A_1488, KT07_Obj-2010, 2009_KT_A_3080, 2010_KT_A_3873, 2010_KT_A_2759; Bob Miller; drawings and composite: M. Jackson)



FIG. 11 Fragments mostly belonging to large storage vessel O14/034 lying on floor at bottom of stairs in area O14 (excavation: K. Green and J. Levell; photo KT2009_S_1238: Bob Miller)



FIG. 12 Broken *pithoi* and large stone objects O14/008 and O14/004 lying in situ in southeast corner of room in O14 (excavation: K. Green and J. Levell; photo KT2009_S_1514: Bob Miller; annotations M. Jackson)



FIG. 13 Locations of objects excavated on the floor in area O15a (excavation: K. Green; Photo KTo8_S-4833, KT-8_A_o846: Bob Miller; annotations and composite: M. Jackson)

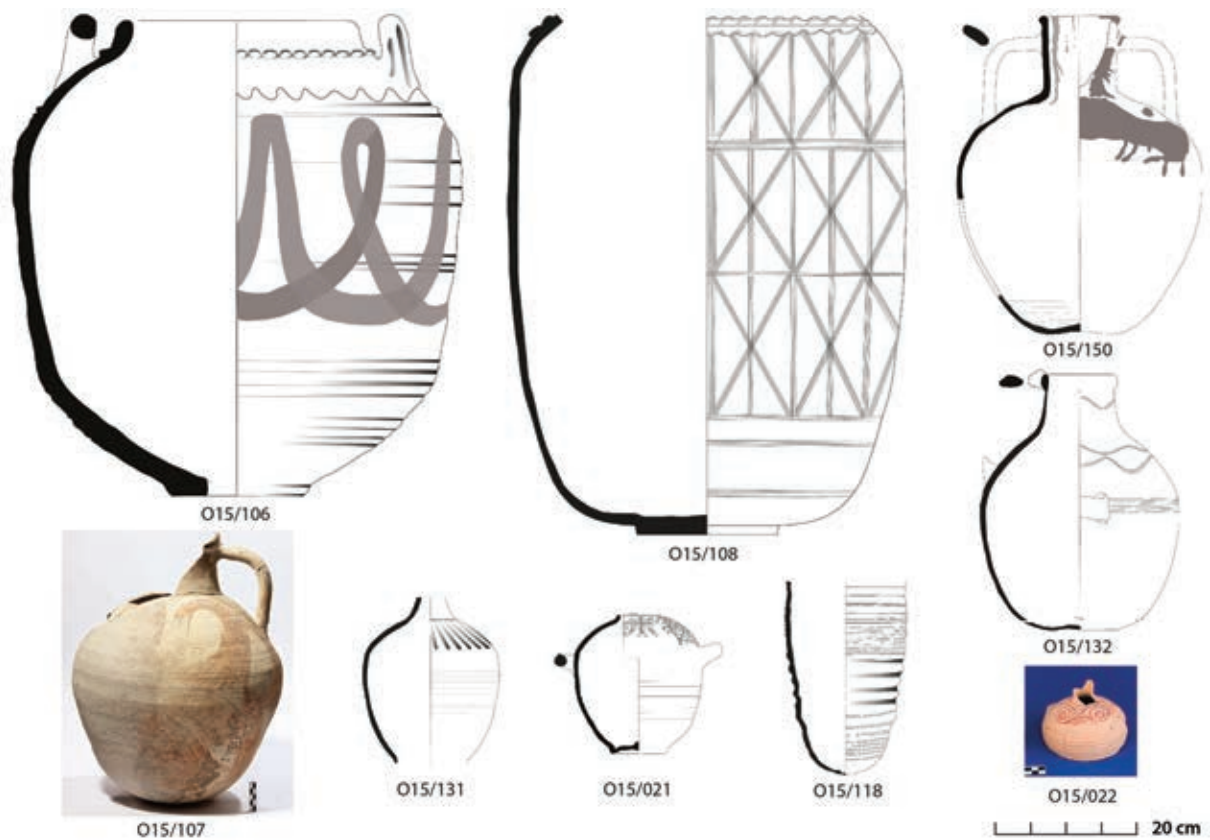


FIG. 14 Assemblage of pottery excavated from the floor of room in O15a (drawings: M. Jackson; photos: Bob Miller)



FIG. 15 Jar O15/021 from above showing decoration (photo KTo7_A_o697: Bob Miller).

Building in O15a

Although O15a is located close to the surface of the mound, excavation revealed the northern part of a rectangular room oriented north-south. An assemblage of finds consisting mostly of ceramic vessels was lying relatively well preserved on the floor surface, which was made of tamped earth and flat paving slabs (fig. 13). The discovery of the artefacts largely complete and on top of the fill built up inside the room suggests they were abandoned following the final phase of activity. A *pithos* (O15/108) and a globular vessel with splashed red-painted decoration (O15/132) were located on the floor close to a curved, low, stone bench-like structure in the northeast corner of the room; it seems likely that these would have stood on the bench. Close to them was found a copper-alloy object (O15/121) of unknown function and another *pithos* (O15/106). Against the west side of the room, a large, globular amphora that apparently once stood on the floor of the room was found preserved intact almost to its rim except for where a plough had damaged it on the upper side. Immediately to the east of the globular amphora, a large body sherd with gouged decoration (O15/131) was found; it is unclear whether this should be considered contemporary with the rest of the assemblage because although it is a large fragment, the rest of the vessel is missing. Immediately to the south of the globular amphora and also placed against the west

wall was the lower part of a LRA1 (O15/023), together with a painted, locally made jar (O15/021).

Jar O15/021 was decorated on the shoulder (fig. 15). A large investment of time was given to excising a cross and four rays of light outlined with a fine incised line; these were then painted a pale brown-orange. The painted decoration extends around the shoulder of the vessel in six large, domed, cross-hatched areas topped with multiple, loosely painted frond-like lines with curved tops that bear a striking resemblance to the hilltop trees local to the area when they are silhouetted against a bright sky in the heat of the afternoon. What seems to be represented here is a cross shining in a stylized landscape of hills and trees.

A square ceramic tile (O15/133) was found in the northern part of the room and another (O15/030) in the southern part.

The southern part of the room was less well preserved, but it appears to have contained a mud-brick and stone fire installation, built apparently against the west side of a partition wall running north-south from the south wall. A small, locally made juglet (O15/022) decorated with a stylized vine and grape motif was preserved in pieces on the floor of this area. Also lying on the floor in the southern part of the room was a large, locally made globular amphora/storage jar (O15/150). The finds in this area complement the repertoire of forms and decoration of vessels found in the rooms in the final early Byzantine phase of the site elsewhere on the mound. The globular amphorae and painted decoration on the locally made vessels would appear to belong to a repertoire of the late seventh or eighth centuries; a sample taken from inside a painted globular amphora (O15/107) may help to refine the chronology of this room and dating will be complemented by analysis of the assemblage of the site as a whole.

N11–N12 to P11–P12 Building

Our main focus in the south-central area of the mound was a building complex identified in the resistivity survey 26.3 meters east-west by 12.6 meters north-south; this lay between N11–N12 and P11–P12 to the southeast of the church. In squares N12, O12, N11, and O11, we excavated six rooms from the west end of this complex (figs. 16 and 17). Four rooms in N11 and N12c and d, arranged in a square, represented the focus of an early Byzantine domestic complex. This part of the building measured ca. 10 meters east to west × 12.6 meters north



FIG. 16 View of the large building excavated in July 2011 in N12, O12, N11, and O11 (view to south) (excavation: S. Moore, T. Sutcliffe, J. Dunn, L. Proctor, A. Sangster; photo KT2011_S_1574: Bob Miller)



FIG. 17 Plan of the large building excavated in July 2011 in N12, O12, N11, and O11 (M. Jackson and T. Sutcliffe)



FIG. 18 Partially reconstructed early Byzantine jar N11/076 with painted decoration from southwest room of the complex in N11 (reconstruction F. McIntosh and F. Lalor; photo KT2011_A_2829; Bob Miller).

to south and had two additional structures constructed on the east side in O11a and O12c.

The walls in O11 and O12 revealed secondary rooms built against the east side of the structure. This method of extension is typical elsewhere on the mound, where rooms were created using walls of preexisting structures, but it helps to show that the original structure was formed by four main rooms arranged in a square. The roof of this building was supported on posts that stood vertically on large stone supports in the center of the rooms and within at least one of the walls between W5100 and W5102, the partition running north-south in N12c.

Northwest Room

Each of these rooms was furnished with a stone and mud-brick bench with fire installation. In the northwest room FI 11/01 (12204) was found against the south wall (the north side of W5500). Each of the

divisions within the fire installation was sampled for organic material.

Southwest Room

A stone and mud-brick bench (F11/08) runs much of the length of the south side of W5500 but stops short of the east wall of the room, where a collection of stones was aligned vertically to create a curved, box-like feature (F11/10). The sherds of a large, locally made jar (N11/076) were enclosed within the fill of this box. This closed vessel had a domed base, ribbing on the walls, two round-profile horizontal handles on the shoulder, and a knobbed vertical handle attached to the rim. The shoulder of the vessel was decorated with red paint; it shows four pairs of fish within the spaces created by four tree-like motifs that appear to be growing up the arms of a stylized cross (fig. 18). A stone mortar (N11/008) was found in fill above the central part of the stone bench immediately south of W5500.

Southeast Room

The southeast room was entered from the west via a well-preserved doorway at the north end of W5501 (fig. 19). There may also have been a doorway or step up into the room to the north through the west end of W5506, where there is a gap in the facing stones on the south side of the wall, wide enough for a doorway. In the north of the room, a poorly preserved mud-brick bench (F11/12) ran along the north wall (W5506). There was a limestone column (F11/13) in the center of the room, similar to F11/11 in the room immediately to the west, to support a wooden post.

Northeast Room

The features of the northeast room N12d were particularly well preserved (fig. 20). The northeast corner was furnished with a stone floor. Steps at the west end of the north wall provided access into the room, which terminated close to a solid stone bench located at the east end of the north wall. Unlike the rooms to the south, which had a single limestone block in the center, here a marble slab supported by stone supports occupied the center of the room. A second bench made of stone and mud-brick located at the south end of the east wall contained a stone-lined box and a tile-lined fire installation (FI 11/02). Within the fill of the tile-lined fire installation were two round stones (N12/682a and N12/682b). At first it was suggested by the excavator that these



FIG. 19 Threshold preserved in wall W5501 in N11a, view to west (excavation: J. Dunn and A. Sangster; photo KT2011_S_1505: Bob Miller)



FIG. 20 Room in N12d, view to east (excavation: S. Moore, A. Sangster, T. Sutcliffe; photo KT2011_S_1373: Bob Miller)



FIG. 21 Collapsed mud brick and stones from walls in O11a, view to east (excavation: L. Proctor; photo KT2011_S_0527: Bob Miller)



FIG. 22 Fire Installation FI11/7, view from south (excavation: S. Moore; photo KT2011_S_1523: Bob Miller)



FIG. 23 Stone mortars O12/57 and O12/58 excavated immediately south of W6600 in O12c (excavation: S. Moore and T. Sutcliffe; photo KT2011_S_1122; Bob Miller)

might have been used as potboilers. But close examination of the stones appear to show that they display marks of percussion in their centers, indicating they were used as hammer stones. Such stones and their wear suggest considerable use, perhaps, in view of their discovery next to fire installations, during food preparation, for example to crack the shells of nuts. Other examples are N14/129 and O11/032.

The early stages of excavation in O11a revealed a mixture of collapsed mud brick and stones beneath topsoil (fig. 21). This represented the remains of the collapsed buildings (unit 12309) and gives us a good indication of the construction materials of the upper courses of the buildings, which formerly existed above the surviving stone foundations.

An external area with a plastered floor was revealed beneath the collapsed building debris in O11a. Here fire installations (FI 11/07 and FI 11/12) were set into a stone and a mud-brick bench constructed against the east wall (W5602) (fig. 22). Two limestone mortars located nearby against the north wall (O12/057 and O12/058; fig. 23), a round stone (O11/032), possibly a pounder (similar to those from beside FI 11/02 in N12d), a vesicular basalt quern (O11/068), a copper lamp chain (O11/064; fig. 24), several ceramic vessels,



FIG. 24 Lamp chain O11/064 from destruction deposit in O11a (photo KT2011_A_1083; Bob Miller)

and a clay lamp (O11/071) provide evidence for some of the activities that took place around this fireplace and the surrounding area.

Fire and Water

Fire installations, which represent one of the recurring features of Kilise Tepe, are found both indoors and outdoors. In summer, fireplaces would have been used mainly for cooking, while in winter they were likely used to keep rooms warm.

The fireplaces are on the ground and built up against walls. In O14 the bench in which the fire installation is set is less than 0.40 meters above the floor; the flat surface of the bench offered a stable place on which to rest pots and other cooking equipment. Women and girls probably tended fires, prepared food using tools such as mortars, and cooked while seated on the ground, much as in the local villages today. As we investigated the fire installations at Kilise Tepe we began to see elements of repetition in the form of the features and their associated finds, as well as in their occurrence, that reflect the degree of labor that went into fueling, tending fires, and into food preparation and cooking (in the wear on pounders and mortars). Such labor, requiring considerable investments of time and resources in a rural community of this kind, would have structured the daily routine. The responsibility for providing food for the household would have defined not only the functions of a part of a room or courtyard, but also the social roles of the people who prepared and cooked it. The fireplace represents one of the many venues for performance in daily life.

Other material remains, such as the painted jars that would have spent a considerable part of their lives not in the house but traveling back and forth, probably on the heads of women, from the spring at the north end of the mound, also reveal the routines of daily life. These water jars were active agents in shaping the lives of people in this rural village community. The decorative schemes painted on them reflect aspects of people's identity and the roles played by these objects in the negotiation of relationships. Such well-used artefacts help us to see how objects were important to the experience of rural Byzantine people and encourage us to tell new stories about life in the Byzantine village.⁴⁴

44 M. Jackson, in preparation.

Summary

The excavations of the Byzantine levels at Kilise Tepe since 2007 reveal a complex history of buildings subject to architectural construction and remodeling, a history visible in the relative sequences of structures in buildings and a succession of floors, features, and associated contexts. Excavation indicated that some of the best preserved deposits from within the structures came at the end of the early Byzantine sequence. It is in this final phase that we gain the clearest image of the artefacts used within the buildings, when, across the mound, there was repeated evidence of the abandonment of the houses. The abandonment of these buildings after centuries of occupation provides a rich data set for interpretation. The final phase of the buildings contains artefacts such as locally made painted wares, storage jars, and cooking vessel types that are consistently replicated across the mound. The similarity of these forms in different parts of the site may be taken to suggest that the settlement as a whole was abandoned in a relatively short space of time. Though it is not possible to say whether there was a single exodus or whether it was staggered over a period of time, the fact that many of the rooms contained their vessels in situ suggests that there may have been a deliberate evacuation of the whole settlement. But before the buildings collapsed, the objects in rooms such as O14 appear to have been deliberately smashed, while others in nearby rooms, such as O15, remained relatively intact. While it is interesting that in O14 there appears to be evidence for the deliberate destruction of ceramic vessels prior to the collapse of the building, several of the buildings in O15, O11a, and M16 showed signs of building collapse apparently after a period when a fine, dusty deposit had accumulated over the room assemblages; the buildings appear to have been derelict by this point and in general the structures seem to have fallen onto artefacts left in the rooms. The lack of finds in the large building east of the church may suggest there was a deliberate removal of objects from that building.

The narrative of the archaeological evidence for the later medieval settlement at Kilise Tepe after this abandonment will be considered in the final excavation report. Certainly reoccupation of the mound had taken place by the early eleventh century, from which period a series of features and finds associated with


buildings and crops have been identified together with the later church and cemetery. The evidence therefore seems to support the interpretation that the site was abandoned for several hundred years at a time of central importance in the history of the region. Radical shifts in society took place across the Middle East at the moment when the historical narratives would place the inhabitants of the small lowland settlement at Kilise Tepe on the fringes of the Byzantine empire, close to the frontier zone first with the Persians and then the new Islamic world. The date of this final phase, to which a significant assemblage of pottery vessels belongs, would appear to fall between the late seventh century and the end of the eighth century, based on parallels with material dated elsewhere.⁴⁵ It is, however, important that the deposits from the

Kilise Tepe project and their associated finds are dated scientifically. It is hoped that, with the results from further samples selected for radiocarbon dating, the archaeological evidence from Kilise Tepe will represent a significant contribution to the ceramic chronology of the eastern Mediterranean.

The site archive from the Byzantine levels at Kilise Tepe provides an unusually rich picture of rural life in Isauria, especially at the end of the early Byzantine period. The material remains in the dwellings reveal a wide range of artefacts and environmental data of the kind often neglected by Byzantine archaeologists in Asia Minor, whose excavations have tended to focus on urban and more monumental sites. The post-excavation analysis of Kilise Tepe is enabling us to consider in context the artefacts from a Byzantine rural settlement and to provide new insight into the lives of people at a time that was until recently considered a “dark age.”

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